



# U.S. Army Information Technology Agency (ITA)

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## Internet Safety and Security Tips for Parents

ITA is pleased to provide this information update as part of our commitment to support your information assurance efforts. This week's bulletin provides information on cyber security at home and tips on how you can aid young people to stay safe while surfing the Internet. For young people there often is very little difference between the "real world" and their "online selves". As a parent, consider the following:

- Remain positively engaged.** Pay attention and be familiar with the online environments that your children use. Try to react constructively when they encounter inappropriate material. Make it a teachable moment.
- Know the protection features** of the websites and software that your children use. Your Internet service provider (ISP) may have tools to help manage young children's online experience (e.g., selecting approved websites, monitoring the amount of time they spend online, or limiting the people who can contact them) and may have other security features, such as pop-up blockers.
- Teach critical thinking.** Help your children identify safe and credible websites. Teach them to be cautious about clicking on, downloading, posting, and uploading content.
- Explain the implications.** Help your children understand the public nature of the Internet and its risks as well as its benefits. Be sure that they understand that any digital information that they share, such as emails, photos, or videos, can easily be copied and posted elsewhere.
- Help them be good digital citizens.** Remind your children to be good "digital friends" by respecting personal information of friends and family and not sharing anything about others that is potentially embarrassing or hurtful.
- Just saying "no" rarely works.** Teach your children how to interact safely with people they "meet" online. Though it's preferable they make no in-person contact with online-only acquaintances, young people may not always follow this rule. So discuss about maximizing safe conditions: meeting only in well-lit public places, always taking at least one friend, and providing detailed information about any plans that they make to a trusted adult.
- Empower your children to handle problems,** such as bullying, unwanted contact, or hurtful comments. Work with them on strategies for when problems arise, such as talking to a trusted adult, not retaliating, calmly talking with the person, blocking the person, or filing a complaint. Agree on steps to take if the strategy fails.

Remember that as a parent it is your responsibility to help your children to stay safe online and to teach them to be cyber savvy with personal information.

**ESS-P delivers monthly information assurance awareness updates as a customer service from ITA.**

Respectfully,  
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